

"THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE."—CHRIST.

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A CURIOUS LOVE EPISODE IN THE LIFE OF THE CELEBRATED JOHN WESLEY.

FROM MANUSCRIPT PAPERS IN THE
BRITISH MUSEUM.

IN June, 1748, we had a conference in London; several of our brethren then objected to the thoughts upon marriage, and in a full and friendly debate convinced me that a believer might marry without suffering loss in his soul.

In August following I was taken ill at Newcastle: Grace Murray attended me continually. I observed her more narrowly than ever before, both as to her temper, sense, and behaviour. I esteemed and loved her more and more; and, when I was a little recovered, I told her, sliding into it I know not how, "If ever I marry, I think you will be the person." After some time I spoke to her more directly. She seemed utterly amazed, and said, "This is too great a blessing for me; I can't tell how to believe it. This is all I could have wished for under heaven, if I had dared to wish for it."

From that time I conversed with her as my own. The night before I left Newcastle, I told her, "I am convinced God has called you to be my fellow-labourer in the Gospel. I will take you with me to Ireland in Spring. Now we must part for a time, but, if we meet again, I trust we shall part no more." She begged we might not part so soon, saying, "It was more than she could bear." Upon which I took her with me through Yorkshire and Derbyshire, where she was unspeakably useful both to me and to the Societies. I left her in Cheshire with John Bennet, and went on my way rejoicing.

Not long after, I received a letter from J. Bennet, and another from her. He desired my consent to marry her. She said "She believed it was the will of God." Hence I date her fall. Here was the first false step, which God permitted indeed, but not approved. I was utterly amazed, but wrote a mild answer to both, supposing they were married already. She replied in so affectionate a manner, that I thought the whole design was at an end.

John Bennet afterwards told me, that on the very night after he had engaged to G. M., just after he lay down in bed and before he had slept at all, he saw her sitting as in deep distress. In the morning, instead of writing to me, he asked her, "Is there not a contract between you and Mr. W.?" Partly out of love to him, partly out of fear of exposing me, she replied, "There is not." This was doubtless another false step. He that standeth, let him take heed lest he fall!

She felt the effects of this all the winter, being under racking uncertainty of mind. When she received a letter from me, she resolved to live and die with me, and wrote to me just what she felt. When she heard from him, her affection for him revived, and she wrote to him in the tenderest manner. In February particularly, she sent him word, "That if he loved her, he should meet her at Sheffield, for she was sent for to Ireland; and, if he did not come now, she could not answer for what might follow."

One cannot excuse her behaviour in all this time. Doubtless she should have renounced the one or other. But those who know human nature will pity her much; at least, as much as they will blame her.

J. Bennet determined to meet her at Sheffield; but, just as he was taking horse, one brought him word, that his brother-in-law was dead, and he must come away directly. So Grace Murray, seeing nothing of him, came on to Bristol. There I talked with her at large. She told me what had passed between her and J. Bennet, and seemed to think that contract was binding, but she was quite convinced it was not when I reminded her of what had passed before between her and me, adding that "till now all this had seemed to her a dream; nor could she possibly think, what I proposed would ever come to pass, and that the difficulty was the greater, because she could not consult with any living soul, for fear of betraying or displeasing me."

We passed several months together in Ireland. I saw the work of God prosper in her hands: she lightened my burden more than can be expressed. She examined all the women in the smaller Societies and the believers in every place. She settled all the women-bands, visited the sick, prayed with the mourners, more and more of whom received remission of sins, during her conversation or prayer. Meantime she was to me both a servant and friend, as well as a fellow-labourer in the gospel. She provided everything I wanted. She told me with all faithfulness and freedom, if she thought anything amiss in my behaviour; and (what I never saw in any other to this day), she knew how to reconcile the utmost plainness of speech with such deep esteem and respect, as I often trembled at, not thinking it was due to any creature, and to join with the most exquisite modesty a tenderness not to be expressed.

The more we conversed together, the more I loved her; and, before I returned from Ireland, we contracted by a contract *de presenti*. All this while she neither wrote to J. Bennet, nor he to her; so the affair between them was as if it had never been.

We returned together to Bristol. It was there or at Kingswood that she heard some idle tales concerning me and Molly Francis. They were so plausibly related that she believed them, and in a sudden vehement fit of jealousy wrote a

loving letter to John Bennet. Of this she told me next day in great agony of mind; but it was too late; his passion revived, and he wrote her word "he would meet her when she came into the North."

We came to London. Talking with an intimate acquaintance there, she hinted at a distance, that Mr. W. loved her. E. Md. replied, "Sister M. never think of it. I know you thro'ly. It would never do. The people here would not suffer you; and your spirit would not bear their behaviour. You have not humility enough, or meekness, or patience. You would be miserable all your life, and that would make him miserable too; so that instead of strengthening, you would weaken his hands. If you love yourself, or if you love him, never think of it more."

This sunk deep, and the more, because she durst not tell me of it. Soon after we set out for the North. At Epsworth, in Lancashire, J. Bennet met us. I was beginning to speak to him freely. But when he told me, "she had sent him all my letters," with several other circumstances of the same kind, all which I then believed to be true, I stopped and said no more. I saw, if these things were so, he had the best right to her; so I thought it better to bear the blame than to lessen his affection for her. I judged it right that they should marry without delay, and wrote her word in the morning, "I thought it was not proper she and I should converse any more together."

She ran to me in an agony of tears, and begged me "not to talk so, unless I designed to kill her." She uttered many other tender expressions. I was distressed exceedingly. Before I was recovered, J. Bennet came in. He claimed her as his right. I was stunned and knew not what to say, still thinking, "She loves him best; and why should I speak, to lay a ground of future uneasiness between them?" Compassion, likewise, and love to her, swayed me much, observing she was sorrowful almost to death, and fearing if each insist on his claim it will be cutting her in sunder. She can never survive it; she will die in the contest. So I again determined to give her up.

In this purpose I went home. I felt no anger, no murmuring, or repining; but deep anguish of spirit from a piercing conviction of the irreparable loss I had sustained. I had no design to converse with her any more, but, about two, one brought me word, "Sister Murray is exceeding ill; she is obliged to keep her bed." I then believed it right to visit her. When I came, she told me in plain terms, "My dear Sir, how can you possibly think I love any other better than you! I love you a thousand times better than I ever loved J. B. in my life. But I am afraid if I don't marry him he will run mad." She showed a letter he had just sent her which confirmed that fear. In the evening he came himself; and then he on the one side and David Trathen on the other, continued urging her, telling her they would not go all night unless they had an answer, till at length she said, "I will marry J. Bennet."

The next morning she told me what had passed. I was more perplexed than ever. As I now knew she loved me, and as she was contracted to me before, I knew not whether I ought to let her go. For several days I was utterly unresolved, till on Wednesday, Sept. 6th, I put it home to herself, "Which will you choose?" she declared again and again, "I am determined by conscience as well as inclination to live and die with you."

We came to Newcastle the same evening. The next day I wrote to J. Bennet.

In the afternoon, without any opportunity or constraint, she wrote a letter to John Bennet. The purport of it was, "That she was more and more convinced both he and she had sinned against God, in entering on any engagement at all without Mr. W.'s knowledge and consent."

Friday, Sept. 8th, we set out for Berwick, visiting all the intermediate Societies. Every hour gave me fresh proof of her usefulness on the one hand and her affection on the other. Yet I could not consent to her repeated request, to *marry immediately*. I told her before this could be done it would be needful: 1. To satisfy J. Bennet; 2. To procure my brother's consent; and 3. To send an account of the reasons on which I

proceeded to every helper and every Society in England, at the same time desiring their prayers. She said she should not be willing to stay above a year. I replied, "Perhaps less time will suffice."

While we were at Berwick, I wrote down a short account of the more remarkable passages of her life. Oh! how has God fed thee with the bread of adversity and with water of affliction! This endeared her to me more than before, and at the same time strongly inclined me to believe, that this severe discipline was designed to prepare her for a comforter of many a mother in Israel.

[We have omitted the interesting account of her life. Our readers who wish to have the whole details, will find them in a work published by John Russel Smith, London. We certainly dissent from the severe censure of that work on the Rev. John Wesley. We think Wesley was to blame in delaying his marriage, which ended so cruelly, as the reader will find. This is all the judgment we pronounce.]

We stayed here from Saturday to Thursday, and the more I knew her the more I loved her. She frequently told me, "In time past I could have married another if you would have given me away, but now it is impossible we should part; God has united us for ever." Abundance of conversation to the same effect we had on our return to Newcastle, where on Sunday, the 17th, we continued conversing together till late at night, and she gave me all the assurances which words could give, of the most intense and inviolable affection. The same she renewed every day, yea, every hour when we were alone, unless we were employed in prayer, which indeed took up a considerable part of the time we were together.

On Monday and Tuesday, that I might be able to form a clearer judgment of her real character, I talked at large with all those who were disgusted at her, and inquired into their reasons for it. I found none of them new except sister Lyddell's, "That she had the impudence to ride into the town with Mr. Wesley" (which was accidentally true, Mr. P. and James Kirkshaw having rode away from

us). Mr. Williams accused [her] "of not lending his wife her saddle" (being just going to take horse herself). Mrs. Williams, of buying a Holland shift (which was not true). Nancy and Peggy Watson, of buying a Joseph before she wanted it; Ann Matteson, of being proud and insolent; and Betty Graham, of buying an apron worth ten shillings (which, indeed, was not bought at all). I plainly perceived jealousy and envy were the real grounds of most of these objections and accusations, and idle senseless prejudice of the rest; offence taken, but not given; so that, after all, her character appeared untouched, and for anything they could prove, she had done all things well.

Christopher Hooper met us at Horseley, and guided us to Hinely-Hill. Understanding he knew John Bennet's design, I told him the whole affair. He was much moved, and undertook to go himself to John Bennet, and try if he could not satisfy him. To this end, he set out on Friday, intending to go on slowly, so as to be at Chinley about Tuesday.

At her request we renewed the contract made in Dublin. B. Hopper, observing her pause and tremble before she spoke the words, asked, "Sister M., have you any scruple upon your mind? if you have the least scruple I beg you would stop. Pray do." She cheerfully replied, "I have none at all;" and then spoke the words immediately. An hour after I took horse for Whitehaven, leaving her to examine and settle the women-bands in Allandale. She stood looking after me till I was up the hill. I had not one uneasy thought, believing God would give us to meet again at the time when He saw good.

Yet from the time I came to Whitehaven there was something hanging on my mind which I knew not how to explain, and the first night I lay there I dreamed John Bennet came to me. I asked him, "Where is Sister Murray?" He replied, "At Chinley." I waked in a moment, and (for that time) slept no more. I wrote to her on Saturday, and was amazed at myself when I began my letter with these lines:—"There is I know not what of sad presage, that tells me we shall never meet again."

But I endeavoured to cast it off, being persuaded that now neither life nor death would part us.

On Sunday in the Afternoon I was calmly waiting upon God, when those words in the first Lesson came as a sword to my heart, *Son of man, behold! I take from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke.* Immediately a shivering ran through me, and in a minute I was in a fever. But when I came home, seeing a vast congregation in the market-place, I could not send them empty away; and while I was speaking to them, God remembered me and strengthened me, both in soul and body.

As soon as I had finished my letter to John Bennet on the 7th instant, I sent a copy of it to my brother at Bristol. The thought of my marrying at all, but especially of my marrying a servant and one so low-born, appeared above measure shocking to him. Thence he inferred it would appear so to all mankind, and consequently, that it would break up all our Societies, and put a stop to the whole work of God.

Full of this, instead of writing to me (who would have met him anywhere at the first summons) he hurried down from Bristol to Leeds. There he met with Robert Swindells and William Shent, who informed him (which he had heard slightly mentioned before) that Grace Murray was engaged to J. Bennet. This was adding oil to the flame. So he posted to Newcastle, taking with him William Shent, not many degrees cooler than himself.

Here he met with Jane Keith, a woman of strong sense and exquisite subtlety. She had long been prejudiced against G. Murray, which had broken out more than once. She gave him just such an account as he wished to hear, and at his request set it down in writing. The sum of it was,—1st. That Mr. Wesley was in love with Grace Murray beyond all sense and reason; 2nd. That he had shown this in the most public manner, and had avowed it to all the Society; and 3rd. That all the town was in an uproar, and all the Societies ready to fly in pieces.

My brother, believing all this, flew on for Whitehaven, concluding G. Murray and I were there together. He reached

it (with W. Shent) on Monday. I was not at all surprised when I saw him. He urged, "All our Preachers would leave us, all our Societies disperse, if I married so mean a woman." He then observed, she was engaged to J. Bennet. As I knew she was pre-engaged to me, as I regarded not her birth, but her qualifications, and as I believed those consequences might be prevented, I could see no valid objection yet. However, I did not insist on my own judgment, but desired the whole might be referred to Mr. Pert, which he readily consented to.

As soon as I was alone, I began to consider with myself, Whether I was *in my senses* or no? Whether love *had put out my eyes* (as my brother affirmed) or I had the use of them still? I weighed the steps I had taken yet again, and the grounds on which I had proceeded.

(To be concluded in the next number.)

GOOD WORDS TO OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

BY RACHEL EVANS.

(Continued from page 75.)

Social duties.—The principles which we have hitherto laid down as the means of attaining personal happiness, relate to our duties in respect, more particularly, to ourselves. Our happiness will depend very much also upon the state of our relations with others. There are certain principles which must regulate these relations, or we cannot enjoy peace and happiness. The other beings with whom we have chiefly to do are our fellow-men and God, and by our feelings and conduct towards both, we often mar and poison our own enjoyment. 1st. By contention with the injustice and selfishness of men; and 2nd. By struggling and repining against the providence of God. 1st. Contentions with man. Christianity makes the human soul *unyielding, uncompromising, firm even unto death* in a matter of principle or duty; but the very reverse, in all respects, in a matter of personal interest. Some Christians, however, are as strenuous in maintaining every tittle

of their rights from their neighbours and business connexions, as the most hard-hearted usurious creditor is, in exacting the uttermost farthing. Any man, however, who will look fairly at the condition of human nature, will see the necessity of mutual forbearance and concession. But all doubt in respect to duty, on this subject, is put at rest by our Saviour's explicit instructions: Let those of my readers who are accustomed to look upon firmness in the maintenance of our own interests as a duty; consider the following words of our Saviour, and ask what they mean. "I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain." Are these now really the words of Christ? and if so, what do they mean? They have a meaning, and although figurative, one that cannot be mistaken; it is this—*that the followers of Christ must not be engaged in quarrels to maintain their own personal interests and rights.* So far, at least, the meaning of the passage is clear; and Christians ought to obey the precept. If there is a quarrel about the well you have dug, go, like Isaac, and dig another; and if this becomes the subject of contention, go and dig a third. Abraham, too, understood the Christian way of settling disputes. "You may take the left hand, and I will take the right, or you may take the right hand, and I will take the left. Is not the whole land before thee?" But we seem to be considering the *duty* of not quarrelling, whereas our subject is not only *duty* but *happiness.* We should therefore rather show the necessity of peace with our fellow-men, in order to secure our own enjoyment. Expect often to find men selfish and blind to the interests and rights of others, and make it a part of your regular calculation to experience inconvenience from this source. In all your agreements be clear and specific beforehand, as you certainly would be, if you knew that everything left indefinite would go in the end against you. This will be the best way to preserve your rights most effectually; but if you

do not think so, if you fear this course will lose something of your rights, you must admit that it is the way to preserve your peace and happiness.

There is another sad and mistaken way in which men mar and destroy their happiness, which is by struggling and repining against the providence of God. Many people think they have a right to murmur and make themselves miserable at acts of injustice which they suffer from others. We forget, in such cases, that so far as we ourselves are concerned the trial comes as really in the providence of God, as in any case whatever. It is remarkable also that there is one case of suffering which most plainly comes from God, and from Him alone, yet which Christians are very slow to submit to. I mean sickness—our own sickness—or that of our friends. Perhaps the very object for which sickness was sent, was to teach you resignation to the divine will. Perhaps God has seen in your conduct a disqualified and repining spirit, awakened by a thousand little circumstances which are beyond your control, and which you therefore ought to consider as ordered by Providence. Now, perhaps God has brought sickness upon you for the sake of removing this fault. How admirably is it calculated to produce this effect. How irresistibly must a man feel that a *very strong hand* is over him, when he is taken from his sphere and laid down upon his bed—all his plans suspended or destroyed—and no human power capable of restoring him to activity again. Oh, one would think, if man could learn submission anywhere, it is here. We must bow before the will of God, and say, "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good." Let us be wise, and prudent, and faithful in all our duties, but never for a moment indulge in an anxious thought; it is rebellion. Let us rather lean entirely with *perfect faith* on our Heavenly Father. Let us say to Him, that we do not know what is best, either for us, or for our family, and ask Him to do with us *just as he pleases*. Then we shall be at peace at all times, because we trust with perfect confidence in a higher power than our own. The sum and substance then of our directions for securing personal happiness in this world is this: keep a clear

conscience, and make your heart right in the sight of God by relinquishing all sin in thought and action; regulate all your worldly affairs, and attend to them industriously and on system, have no quarrels with men, and submit cheerfully to all the dealings of God. Let any man who is not happy reform his character and habits on these principles. Let him do the work thoroughly and honestly, and the blessing of God will surely rest on his labours.

Happiness derived from natural objects.

—It would seem to be the great plan and the great employment of the Deity to provide his creatures with the means of happiness in the greatest possible variety. Take your stand upon the seashore, on a summer morning, and observe the expression of the face of nature. It is, as it were, the expression of the countenance of God. Observe the serene sky—the mild balmy air—the smooth expanse of water before you, reflecting, as in a polished mirror, every rocky crag, and smooth island, and sandy shore, and even every spar and rope of the vessel which seems to sleep upon its bosom. He who has a soul capable of understanding it, will sit for hours upon the green bank at a time like this, receiving an indescribable pleasure from the general expression of such a scene. It is an expression of divine benevolence, beaming from the works of God, which it is strange that human beings can ever fail to understand and love. How many thousand contrivances has the Almighty planned and executed to make men happy? In fact, if man acts on proper principles, and according to the intentions of the Creator, everything is a source of happiness to him. Employment is pleasant, and rest is pleasant. It is pleasant to begin a new work; it is pleasant to finish one begun. Morning is delightful, with its freshness, its animation, its calls, and its opportunities for exertion. Evening is delightful, too, with its quiet, its stillness, its repose. Each comes with its own peculiar voice to the heart, and fills it with peaceful happiness.

Value of personal piety.—Our Saviour lays the greatest stress upon the power and influence of *Christian example*. His followers were to be the light of the

world. They were to be the *salt*, which purifies and saves by its presence, and its direct and salutary action. They were to be the *leaven*, which communicates its own properties to the mass which surrounds it, by the simple influence of its touch. In effect, it was our Saviour's character which gave their immense effect to his instructions; and Paul, if he had been a selfish, worldly man, might have declaimed against sin in Jerusalem, or Athens, or Rome, for half a century in vain. The rapid progress of true religion in early times was undoubtedly owing, in a great measure, to the lofty standard of practical piety, by which the instructions of public preaching were enforced. The pulse of ardent love to God, and true benevolence to man, beat high and strong in the hearts of the early Christians; and the *warm* fire is the one which spreads easily. Do we earnestly aim therefore at doing good in the world, and of improving the characters of those around us, we must commence by a strict examination of our own motives and principles of action, and endeavour earnestly to bring them into a right direction, setting before us the perfect example of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, "who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." Thus shall we obtain the approbation of God, and in the end the respect and good-will of our fellow-men. By carefully abstaining from even an appearance of evil, we shall erect a standard of excellence by which others may regulate their actions, and by emulation attain the same degree of good which we ourselves exhibit. In the first place, "no guile must be found in our mouth." In all our words and actions we must endeavour to be sincere and honest. Even in our prayers and conversation we detect ourselves, at times, assuming an air and tone of deep feeling which we do not really possess. Hypocrisy is one of the forms of sin into which the human heart most easily and continually slides. But our hypocrisy seldom deceives anybody but ourselves. The world is quick to detect the difference between what is natural and what is affected and assumed. It is real interest in religion, real heart-felt attachment to God, and honest, friendly interest in man which

the spirit of God sanctified as a means to touch the feelings of others, and to arouse conscience, and awaken a sense of obligation to God; while the affectation of what is not possessed is a slim disguise, which the instinct of mankind detects at once and repels. Be honest, then: be natural. If you really feel any warm-hearted interest in those around you, let your words and actions freely show it; but if you do not, guard most carefully against the attempt to feign any. Piety, if it exist at all, must exist generally as a calm, steady principle of action, charging its forms, and manifesting itself as religious emotion only occasionally. Our business is, in order to bring our hearts in a right state in respect to God's kingdom in this work, to cultivate a healthy, active interest in it, not to struggle in vain for continued religious emotion. Our example of a useful and consistent life will lead others into the right path; and if we wish to do them real spiritual good we must humbly and earnestly ask God to help us. He will work in them to will and to do. While you kindly invite, he must move their hearts to love the boon you offer, and to accept the invitation. You must always feel this. It will make you quiet, lowly, submissive: you will walk humbly and softly before God in your labours to promote his cause, and it will be safe for him to give you success. "Walk humbly and softly before God." There is a great meaning in these words. Like children who go out with their father to a work of difficulty or danger, too much for their feeble powers. They walk quietly by his side; they speak to him with subdued voices, and walk with cautious steps, looking up to him for direction, and trusting to his strength for success. Just so the Christian should walk in his path of active duty in this world, humbly and softly by the side of his Father. The Christian must expect, if he is faithful, to be buffeted and opposed, and hated, but it will be only by a few, whose peculiar circumstances or depraved dispositions separate them from mankind at large. Many circumstances in the past history of piety show that men have often been disposed to perceive its excellence in others, even when they would not

yield to its influences themselves. Abraham was received with favour where he went. Joseph was generally respected and beloved. The character of Daniel commanded admiration, though there were malignant individuals who plotted against his life. John the Baptist was in no danger from the throngs around him, while defenceless, and in the solitary wilderness, he reproveth them of sin. On the contrary, they loved to hear him. If, then, the example of these good men has been the means of preserving a multitude from their sins, while it excited their reverence and love, we should surely endeavour to attain personal holiness, that we may also be examples to those who follow and those who live with us. In order to "prepare the way" for the coming of the Lord in our hearts, we must first repent sincerely of the sins we have committed, laying them aside with greatest firmness and determination; and then with fervent prayer read the Bible to arrive at a knowledge of our duty through the divine truths therein contained. A young person, who earnestly and sincerely desires to arrive at the truth, has only to turn to the New Testament, and the words of the blessed Saviour will surely guide him into a knowledge of all he desires. The young man who came to our Lord, asking, in all humility, "What must I do to be saved?" was directed to "Keep the commandments;" and there is no plainer direction in our day for those who seek the right way. The narrative is so beautiful, and so full of heavenly wisdom, that we cannot do better than transcribe it. "Behold, one came and said unto him, 'Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?'" And he said unto him, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God; but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." He saith unto him, "Which?" Jesus said, "Thou shalt do no murder; thou shalt not commit adultery; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not bear false witness; honour thy father and mother; and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The young man saith unto him, "All these things have I kept from my youth up, what lack I yet?" Jesus said unto him, "If thou wilt be perfect,

go and sell all that thou hast, and give it to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me." Another asked him, "But who is my neighbour?" Whereupon our Lord related the beautiful parable of the good Samaritan, to illustrate the truth that those only who do us real good are our neighbours. We learn from this that those who design or wish us evil, or those who would lead us from the right path in any way, cannot be regarded as neighbours, however near they may live to us. We are told "not to walk in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stand in the way of sinners," for however pleasant may be the temptations they hold out to us, "What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon," is a truth we are made daily to feel. If we give up the service of God for the riches and vanities of the world, our soul is gradually weaned from its Creator, and we think only of the creature. We live, as it were, without God in the world. To be over anxious even about the necessities of life is injurious to the welfare of the soul. "Take no thought for your life what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?" "Behold the fowls of the air; for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Seek ye first the kingdom of righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you." Our Lord's sermon on the Mount from which the preceding passage is taken, is filled with divine precepts of goodness which we should take to heart, and practice every day of our lives. "Blessed are the poor in spirit,

for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." To be poor in spirit, or humble in our own estimation, is a virtue little valued by the world at large, but of costless price in the sight of God. In cultivating this lowly spirit we feel that the kingdom of heaven is within us. We are comparatively independent of external evils, and in time they cease to affect us. We obey the injunction, "Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." These are not the maxims of the world; on the contrary, whoever practises them would, in the present state of society, be condemned. The peculiar virtue of faith is everywhere commended in the New Testament. "The just shall live by faith." "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house." "Be not slothful, but followers of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises." "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." But we are told also that "Faith without works is dead." "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, depart in peace; be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works; shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Nor must we only follow the precepts of Jesus—his divine example also will lead us into the paths of salvation. "His heart and life were wholly devoted to God. It was his meat to do the will of Him that sent him, and to finish his work." The aim

of all his actions, the great object to which his attention and labours were directed, was the glory of God. Having this in view, with what fervour and fidelity did he preach? With what constancy and zeal did he execute his commission? Nor was he less patient and submissive in suffering the will of God than diligent in doing it. Quick as was his sense of pain, sore as was the amazement which seized him, and heavy as was the sorrow with which he was compassed about, still he was resigned. "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done! These principles of piety, these devout affections, were cherished and maintained by the outward acts and secret exercises of religion, in which he was regular without ostentation, and fervent without the raptures of enthusiasm, or the horrors of superstition. His life, we may say, was a kind of prayer, a constant course of communion with God; "if the sacrifice was not always offering, yet was the fire still kept alive."

To be continued.

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CLEAR SKY BEYOND.

ONE's pathway of life is not always clear. Of God it is said, "Clouds and darkness are round about Him." We suppose it means in reference to our conceptions of Him, our not knowing his ways; for it is added, "Righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne." But respecting human pathways, it is certain that clouds settle down upon all of us at times. In such times, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. He needs to *trust*, and to walk by faith.

All men have troubles. When the morning opens fair and clear, its noon soon becomes overcast with dark clouds, and nothing is more natural than to fear as one enters the cloud. We want to see our way; and when God shuts it up, we complain and cry out, "All this is against me; as blindly and erroneously as Jacob did." Now this is unchristian. We ought to trust and not be afraid. What promises we have! "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." "As thy day so shall thy strength be." "Nothing shall harm you if ye be followers of that which is good." Beyond these clouds there is a clear sky; and when the traveller can see but a little before him, he must still press on, and success shall soon repay all his toil.

Others sail along smoothly while my lot is a hard one, is the complaint of thousands. Well, it may be so, or it may only *seem* so. Each heart knows its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddles not with one's inmost experiences. Perhaps your friend who always seems to you so cheerful and undisturbed, has his full share of the ills that flesh is heir to—equal to your own; but that he bears up better under them than you do. This is the more probable. But if not—you have more clouds and less sunshine than is the common lot; not a sparrow alights on earth without the notice of your Father which is in heaven; the hairs of your head are all numbered, your trials are all known unto God; it is he that appoints the rod which you are to greet joyously.

But above all, do not borrow trouble beforehand. More than half of the troubles of mortals are imaginary. Clouds will

come that are real. Do not encircle your way with unreal mists. When clouds are round about you, these have silver linings, and the sky is clear beyond. Soon these shall break away, and God's sunshine shall burst in glory around thy head.

HAVE YOU A CREED?

Yes, and so has every man of ordinary intelligence or good sense. Every man, indeed, believes something, and therefore has, whether written or spoken, whether confessed or hidden, some belief or creed. Every man has his religious opinions of some kind, *i.e.*, opinions about religion, God, Christ, the Bible, man, the future life; and these opinions really constitute his creed. We do not see, therefore, how a man, who has any opinions at all, can deny that in this sense he has a belief or creed. But now let us go further. Suppose a number of Christian people in any community agree essentially in the same opinions or belief, is there any harm in their stating or making known this fact, or any harm in their writing out their unwritten creed, and calling it, when written, their united expression of religious belief? WE CAN SEE NONE, AND REALLY MARVEL HOW ANYBODY ELSE CAN OPPOSE CREEDS, AS WE HAVE NOW DEFINED THE TERM. Be sure, if these people endeavour to impose their creeds upon other minds, or attempt to *coerce* them into its support, if they make this creed a final and unalterable thing that ought not to be, and by their consent never shall be changed, if they say all men must adopt it or they will refuse them the Christian name, and call and treat them as skeptics or the enemies of Christ and his religion, and the creed is thus made a test of character or spirit, then we dissent, and tell them plainly that they have no right to put forward their creed without correction or alteration as the exact truth of God, and pronounce all men God's foes or Christ's revilers who can not conscientiously adopt it. They who agree in opinion, will walk and work together; but if they regard every man who cannot sign their creed as a heathen man or a reviler, then they plainly depart from the law of Christ.

THE SUM OF RELIGION.

[Written by Judge Hale, Lord Chief Justice of England.]

HE that fears the LORD of Heaven and Earth, walks humbly before Him, thankfully lays hold of the messages of Redemption by JESUS CHRIST, and strives to express his thankfulness by the sincerity of his obedience. He walks watchfully in the denial of himself, and holds no confederacy with any lust or known sin; if he falls in the least measure, he is restless till he has made his peace by true repentance. He is true to his promises, just in his dealings, charitable to the poor, sincere in his devotion. He will not deliberately dishonour God, although secure of impunity. He hath his hopes and conversation in Heaven, and dares not do anything unjustly, be it ever so much to his advantage; and all this because he sees him that is invisible, and fears him because he loves him; fears him as well for his goodness as his greatness. Such a man, whether he be an EPISCOPALIAN, or a PRESBYTERIAN, an INDEPENDENT, or an ANA-BAPTIST, whether he wears a surplice, or wears none; whether he hears organs or hears none; whether he kneels at the Communion, or, for consciences' sake, stands or sits, he hath the LIFE OF RELIGION in him; and that life acts in him, and will conform his soul to the image of his SAVIOUR,—and go along with him to eternity, notwithstanding his practice, or non-practice of things indifferent. On the other side, if a man fears not the Eternal God, he can commit sin with presumption, drink excessively, swear vainly and falsely, commit adultery, lie, cozen, cheat, break his promises, live loosely, though at the same time he may be studious to practice every ceremony even to a scrupulous exactness, or may, perhaps, as stubbornly oppose them. Though such a one should cry down Bishops and Presbytery,—though he should be re-baptized every day, or declaim against it as heresy, and though he fast all the Lent, or feast out of pretence of avoiding superstitions, yet, notwithstanding these and a thousand external conformities, or zealous oppositions of them, he wants the LIFE OF RELIGION.

ETERNAL LIFE.

THE phrase “eternal life,” as we know, occurs often in the New Testament, especially in the Gospel of John. Now, this term “eternal life” usually means a present spiritual state of the soul. Take a few instances of this:

John iii. 36: “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.”

John iv. 14: “The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life.”

John vi. 47: “He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.”

John xvii. 3: “This is life eternal, that they may know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.”

Gal. vi. 8: “Shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.”

1 Tim. vi. 12: “Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life.”

In all these cases, “eternal life” evidently refers to the present religious state of the soul. It is an inward life which is described, not an outward one; a present life, and not a future one. When it is said (Rom. ii. 7.) that God will give eternal life to those who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, honour, and immortality, the meaning surely, is, not that he will give them a life which cannot end, but rather that he will give them a life having a heavenly or spiritual nature. The spring of water in the soul, which Christ promises, wells up constantly into present spiritual joy—not into future, never-ending being.

In some instances, if *aiouion* were translated “everlasting” or “never-ending,” it would make such palpable nonsense, that our translators have been obliged to give it an entirely different rendering. Thus (Tim. i. 9; Titus i. 2) we have the phrase *pro kronon aionion*, which would be, literally, “before eternity,” or “before everlasting time began,” according to the common rendering. They have, therefore, translated it, “before the world began.” In the same way, (Matt. xiv. 3; 1 Cor. x. 11) they were obliged to change their usual rendering, or they would have to say, “So shall it be at the end of for ever,” or, “The ends of eternity have arrived.”—*Christian Inquirer*.

**"TO US THERE IS BUT ONE GOD,
THE FATHER."**

BY JOHN SHANNON.

A SHORT time ago I was talking on religious subjects to a person whom I occasionally meet, and I offered him some tracts explanatory of Unitarian doctrine. I said that my object in giving him the tracts was to inform him exactly concerning our belief, and he could search the Scriptures for himself, prove all things, and hold fast that which is good.

He said, "I shall be glad to read these tracts. I think I understand the doctrines of all the other sects; but I am entirely unacquainted with the views of Unitarians. Why do you call yourselves Unitarians?"

I replied, "We call ourselves Unitarians because the great fundamental truth which we hold, and which we prize above all others, is the strict and undivided Unity of God. Trinitarians 'worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity;' they often address prayers to the Deity similar to that in the Litany of the Church established by law, 'O holy, blessed, and glorious Trinity; three Persons in one God; have mercy upon us miserable sinners.' Unitarians, being strict believers in the Divine Unity, take for their motto the words of St. Paul, 'To us there is but One God, the Father,' and for this cause, like him, we bow our knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

"Then," said he, "you attach great importance to the doctrine of the Divine Unity?" I replied, "Yes; and I shall briefly explain to you our reasons for so doing."

This truth, we think, is taught in *nature*. The uniformity of plan in all the arrangements of the universe points unequivocally to One designing Mind. There is no jarring or discord in the works of nature—nothing to lead us to suppose that there are many intelligencies overruling all things, or that these intelligencies come into conflict and have different plans. In studying the operations of nature, the conviction becomes deeply impressed that there is in them a regularity which undubitably points to One designing and controlling Mind.

The Unity of God, we think, is not less emphatically taught in *Scripture*. The greater portion of the Bible was written to bear testimony to this truth, and as a barrier against idolatry and polytheism. Abraham, as a believer in the Divine Unity, left his own idolatrous kindred and countrymen, and became a sojourner in a strange land, led on by Providence, not knowing whither he went. The Israelites were a people chosen to bear witness to this truth, Moses was appointed their leader and he gave them laws. Many of the ceremonies of Judaism appear to us, in the present day, strange; but when we consider that they served to bind the nation together into a common brotherhood, that they prevented them to a great degree from fraternizing with idolaters, and that they enshrined the great and everlasting truth of the Divine Unity,—our wonder ceases. The first of

the Jewish commandments is, "Thou shalt have no other Gods before me." Their laws are generally prefaced with the memorable words, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One Lord."

David was a strict believer in One Living and True God. All his confessions, petitions, and thanksgivings were addressed to the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone hath immortality and who dwelleth in the light that no man can approach. The book of sacred songs, usually named the Psalms of David, is a beautiful specimen of the devotional literature of the Jewish Church, and the Unity of God is the central truth recognized in all these Psalms. In their own touching language, the Heathen worship gods that have eyes but see not, and ears but hear not, and hands but handle not; whereas, adoration, prayer, and praise ought to be offered to One God, the Creator of all things, whose eyes run to and fro over the whole earth, and there is nothing hid from their searching glance.

The Jewish prophets bore unceasing testimony to the Unity of God. Isaiah frequently styles Jehovah "the Holy One of Israel." Jeremiah says, "There is none like unto thee, O Jehovah, there is none like unto thee." This is the striking language of Zechariah—"And the Lord shall be king over all the earth; in that day shall there be One Lord and his name One." Malachi says, "Have we not all One Father?—hath not One God created us?"

The Unity of God is most emphatically taught by Jesus. He said, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but One, that is God." He spoke of the Father as "the only true God;" he said, "of that day and that hour knoweth no man; no, not the angels who are in heaven, neither the Son but the Father." He directed prayers and praises to be addressed to the Father only. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." "When ye pray, say, Our Father who art in heaven." "The true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him." "In that day ye shall ask me nothing; verily, verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." This great truth he not only enforced by precept, but by example. His was a life of obedience and devotion to his Father and our Father, his God and our God. He retired into the mountain, and continued all night in prayer to God; and the last sentence wafted from his lips was a prayer—"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

The strict Unity of God is consistently maintained by the Apostles. This is only what may be expected. The Apostles of Christ were brought up and educated in the Jewish faith; they were carefully instructed in the doctrine of the Divine Unity by their parents and their preceptors; like their countrymen, they were taught to think that God had kept the Jews a separate people, that they might bear testimony to this truth in the presence of the Heathen, who believed in Lords many and Gods many. As the Apostles were so carefully educated in the doctrine of the Divine Unity, and as they

never heard anything from Christ to contradict it—but much to support it—that doctrine will undoubtedly shine forth like a line of light in their teaching. It is so. "There is One God," say they, "and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." In all the teachings of the Apostles, and you will observe it more especially in their salutations and benedictions to the different churches recorded at the beginning and end of their Epistles, they are most careful to distinguish between the One God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of the Father.

My friend said, "If the Unity of God be so emphatically taught in the works of nature and the records of Revelation, how did the doctrine of the Trinity originate?—from what source did it spring?"

I replied, "The Trinity was an offspring of the Platonic philosophy. Many of the early and most distinguished Fathers of the Church were Platonists before they became Christians, they engrafted many of their Platonic ideas upon Christianity, and unfortunately used Platonic language in expressing the doctrines of their newly-accepted faith. The Platonists used the Greek word "Trias" to express some distinction in the Godhead. It did not mean three persons; in fact, it is difficult to know exactly what it did mean. This Greek word "Trias" was translated "Trinitas" in Latin, and hence our English word "Trinity"—a word found nowhere in Scripture. Augustine, who lived in the beginning of the fifth century, says that "he was in the dark with regard to the Trinity, until he found the true doctrine concerning the divine word in a Latin translation of some Platonic writings, which the providence of God had thrown in his way."

My friend said, "I perceive you value the doctrine of the Divine Unity because you believe it is consonant to reason and Scripture."

I replied, "Yes; and we cherish it because of its practical bearings. It is difficult to worship three persons, for the mind becomes distracted. There is a fear that we may love one Person more than another, that we may consider the Son merciful and the Father wrathful. God says he will not give his glory to another; and we cannot pay him an undivided homage if we introduce rivals on his throne. Christ says, 'The Lord our God is One Lord, and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.' Believing God to be One, we can love him with all our heart; He is then the centre of an undivided affection, the object of an undivided homage. The Unity of God is not a mere intellectual proposition that may be indifferently maintained or rejected; it is a doctrine full of the holiest and happiest influences upon the affections, and calculated to produce harmony in the human heart."

Immortal praise to God be given,

By all in earth and all in heaven;

The First, the Last, who reigns alone,

And fills an undivided throne.

THE AMERICAN NEW SONG.

We wait beneath the furnace-blast

The pangs of transformation:

Not painlessly doth God recast

And mould anew the nation.

Hot burns the fire

Where wrongs expire;

Nor spares the hand

That from the land

Uproots the ancient evil.

The hand-breadth cloud the sages feared

Its bloody rain is dropping;

The poison plant the fathers spared

All else is overtopping.

East, West, South, North,

It curses earth;

All justice dies,

And fraud and lies

Live only in its shadow.

What gives the wheat-fields blades of steel?

What points the rebel canon?

What sets the roaring rabble's heel

On the old star-spangled pennon?

What breaks the oath

Of the men o' the South?

What whets the knife

For the Union's life?—

Hark to the answer: **SLAVERY?**

Then waste no blows on lesser foes

In strife unworthy freemen.

God lifts to-day the veil and shows

The features of the demon!

O North and South,

Its victims both,

Can ye not cry,

"Let Slavery die!"

And union find in freedom?

What though the cast-out spirit tear

The nation in his going,

We who have shared the guilt must share

The pang of his overthrowing!

Whate'er the loss,

Whate'er the cross,

Shall they complain

Of present pain?

Who trust in God's hereafter?

For who that leans on His right arm

Was ever yet forsaken?

What righteous cause can suffer harm

If He its part has taken?

Though wild and loud

And dark the cloud,

Behind its folds

His hand upholds

The calm sky of to-morrow!

Above the maddening cry for blood,

Above the wild war-drumming,

Let Freedom's voice be heard, with good

The evil overcoming.

Give prayer and purse

To stay the Curse

Whose wrong we share,

Whose shame we bear,

Whose end shall gladden Heaven!

In vain the bells of war shall ring
Of triumphs and revenges,
While still is spared the evil thing
That severs and estranges.

But, blest the ear
That yet shall hear
The jubilant bell
That rings the knell
Of Slavery for ever!

Then let the selfish lip be dumb,
And hushed the breath of sighing;
Before the joy of peace, must come
The pains of purifying.

God give us grace
Each in his place
To bear his lot,
And, murmuring not,

Endure, and wait, and labour!—WHITTIER.

POLITENESS.

AN acute critic has said that any one who caught the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount, could not fail to be a gentleman. There is much truth in the remark, for the Christian spirit which enjoins a careful consideration of the feelings of others, makes its possessor polite and courteous. An exchange sets forth some of the advantages of politeness, which costs nothing.

One of our English infidels was so struck with the politeness and good feeling manifested in St. Paul's writings, that he affirmed if St. Paul had said that he himself had ever performed a miracle, he would believe it, because he deemed St. Paul too much of a gentleman to tell an untruth. Whatever we may think of this remark, we cannot but be struck with the power which politeness had over the infidel. And as this infidel is not an exception, it may be well to show some few of the advantages of being polite.

1.—*We conform to the Scriptures.* If St. Paul taught politeness by his example, so did he in his writings. He tells us, "In honour we must prefer one another." Here is the great secret of politeness, viz., forgetfulness of self. In another place he says, "Be courteous;" in other words, be polite.

2.—*We make friends.* Nothing so wins upon strangers as true politeness. A little attention shown costs us very little. But what an effect it has upon the persons to whom the attention is shown! The pleased look, the gratified smile, show us we have gained a friend.

3.—*We increase our usefulness.* One reason why ministers and good Christian people have no more influence, is on account of their sour faces and forbidding countenances. They look as if they said, Keep away from me. But if they allow the vulgar to approach within reach of their majestic presence, there is a pompous way or manner they have, which prevents the hearts of others going out to them, and thus influence over such people is lost.

4.—*It gives success.* Let any man who has goods to sell, or office to attain, be kind and polite, no sham—like that put on by the politicians—and his goods are sold and his office reached, ten times sooner than the man who looks mad and cuts you as he cuts off his calicos and cloths.

A WARNING TO POACHERS ON WESLEYAN PRESERVES.

ADDRESSED TO UNITARIAN MISSIONARIES.

IN the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, April, 1862, p. 161, we are informed that when William III. secured to the nation an equitable and a welcome toleration, the Nonconformists quietly and gradually retired from the field of conflict, and, with but a few exceptions, settled down into a heartless formality, or were lost in the deep and fearful gloom of Socinianism.

On page 178, we read—"Have we not cause for humiliation, in the fact that the members in church fellowship with us bear an inadequate proportion to the numbers who regularly attend our places of worship? Is there not growing up, in the very midst of our religious ordinances, a multitude of unconverted persons who are content to live with the form indeed, but without the power of vital godliness?"

"We earnestly call your attention to this class of hearers, and invite your special efforts on their behalf."—(Annual address of the Conference to the Methodist societies, 1861.)

After recommending the exercise of restraint as especially applicable to companions, associates, fellow-workmen, and children, we have the following paragraph (page 180).

"There are two very strong reasons to induce us to put forth 'special efforts in behalf' of the class for whom the Conference pleads in the address; the first is, that by so doing we shall increase the power of the church of God, by adding to its numbers, by securing the influence, labour and sympathy of those who at present merely behold it from a platform outside.

"We shall rivet to our part of the church the hearts of many who are looked at with the eye of envy by those who 'follow not us.'

"We shall thus conserve our own interests; and, by careful folding and shepherding, we shall save many of our flock from the ravages of wolves, or from being decoyed by specious seducers to other folds.

"None can offer larger tracts of green pastures, or more copious supplies of still waters, than can the shepherds of our own church; but many there are ready to beseech our undecided people to seek refreshment elsewhere.

"Let us, however, believing our own fold to be safe—our own pastures the sweetest, and large enough—have the honesty to make every one aware of our belief, and let us teach the fact to those now with us; and make all intruders feel that when by any bribe of one sort or another, they approach our tender ones to tempt and allure, they will, in every case, have to meet watchers who are quite prepared and determined to 'hold our own,' that whilst on the one hand we will not seek to make proselytes, on the other hand we will not delicately handle *poachers* on our own preserves."

Young men beware!—If you attempt to decoy from Wesleyan "green pastures and still waters"—into the deep and fearful gloom of Socinianism—any sheep who may be undecided as to whether

or no there are sweeter pastures and purer waters elsewhere, beware of the watchers—remember their eyes are upon you—and they are prepared and determined to make all intruders feel their resolution to hold their own, and to handle not very delicately *poachers on their preserves*.

Should you in your missionary work meet with any poor possessed spirits wandering among the tombs, tearing themselves, and crying out in their frenzy—

“The Unitarian fiend expel,
And send his doctrine back to hell,”

beware of the watchers—the spiritual game-keepers. You may perhaps feel tempted to say, “Come with us and we will do you good: we will lead you to him who cast out devils, and who said, ‘Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free,’” and by so doing unconsciously infringe the game laws, and run the risk of being indelicately handled. *Beware!*

You may meet with some poor mortal who has been possessed from a child by the spirit of fanaticism—who cannot trust his own judgment—believe his own eyes—rely upon his own conscience—tearing himself with passion—gnashing his teeth with fear—and pining away—and you may feel inclined to take him by the hand, to lift him up, to unveil to him the Father, and restore him to his right mind. If you do, beware of the *watchers*.

You may meet with some poor young man who never saw Jesus, except as a bleeding God; who never saw the *Father*, except as a “tyrant omnipotent to damn;” and you may be tempted to open his eyes by a “touch of nature,” and he may leap for joy, and be cast out of the synagogue—called apostate—heretic—dangerous man—accursed—and you having never been to their school, may be called sinners, and indelicately handled by those who bind heavy burdens—love chief seats—like to be called master—make long prayers—say “We have Wesley for our father”—cast stones at all who say “Ye shall be free”—“conserve their own interests”—carefully guard their flocks from *specious seducers*—keep them well penned up in their green pastures—give them copious supplies of their “still waters”—severely punish all intruders—and roughly handle all poachers. “Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.”

But fear not. It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom—proclaim the kingdom of heaven at hand, the kingdom of God within—liberty to the captive—the opening of the prison doors to them that are bound.

J. E.

A CONFESSION OF FAITH,

Said to have been made in Constantinople in 1585, by one complained of as a heretic, before some Latin and Greek Christians, and also several Jews and Turks.

We believe that there is One First of all things—which comprehendeth them all—which cannot be comprehended of any. That there is

one Cause and one Essence of all things that have a being; one Supreme Good which we call God—whom we know in the mind, and honour in speech; showing, by goodness and well-doing, that we are the children of our Father, the Supreme Good.

We believe in one Jesus Christ, who is the perfect Example and Pattern of the children of God—whom we are to follow in patient suffering of the creature, and in love to our neighbour, and so become temples of his Spirit—where the only divine worship which is acceptable to God, the highest God, is well-doing.

We believe also in the Holy Ghost, when we feel the operative Power of this highest good in ourselves. We are all in the communion of Christ, and they who enjoy this communion are born again into this Power, and thereby deified, [*i.e.* “made partakers of the divine nature”?] being raised above nature to a state of incorruption and immortality, and by this means become instruments of the endless glory of God.

Without holding these things, none can have a true or right faith.

Question.—Why were you born?

Answer.—For God’s good will.

Q.—For what end were you born?

A.—For the glory of God.

Q.—What is your religion?

A.—Well-doing.

Q.—What is your profession?

A.—Our own nothingness.

Q.—What is your comfort?

A.—God’s Almightiness.

Q.—What is your prayer?

A.—To be resigned and will-less.

Q.—What is your life?

A.—God’s goodness.

Q.—What is your death?

A.—A translation into the glory of God.

Q.—What do you hold amongst so many religions as are in the world?

A.—We believe of God in goodness; we think of our neighbour in love, and meanly of ourselves.

Q.—Are you baptized?

A.—Yes; and are yet willing to be baptized.

Q.—Wherewithal?

A.—With water, which the moving of the Spirit of God drives from our hearts, through our eyes, and incorporates in His Love; at times when it seems good unto Him.

Q.—Do you celebrate the Lord’s Supper?

A.—Yes; many times and oft.

Q.—In what Church or Communion?

A.—In the Church or Communion of God.

Q.—What do you hold of Christ’s body—what is his flesh and blood?

A.—Christ’s flesh is a constant enduring patience, and his blood is a divine, operative, living Love; where this flesh is professed in patience, and where this blood lives in Love, there is the true Communion of the Body of Jesus Christ. This suffering flesh and this loving blood of Christ make us children of God, and by means thereof we have communion with the Son of God—the substance and good nature of God comes into us, and that cannot be without a trans-substantiation, or a change and destruction of our evil nature.

WAYSIDE GATHERINGS.

THE FIRE SNORTERS.—A fire and brimstone preacher has scattered his flock, in a little town we could name, from his fearful denunciations, in the pulpit, of hell and damnation. It reminds us of the dogs of ancient fable destroying their own masters.

THE HUMAN VOICE.—The sweetest music is not in the oratorio, but in the human voice when it speaks from its instant life-tones of tenderness, truth, or courage. The oratorio has lost its relation to the morning, to the sun, to the earth; but that persuading voice is in tune with these.
—*Emerson.*

A FUNERAL SERMON.—A coarse, ill-natured fellow died one day, and his friends assembled at his funeral, but no one had a good word to say about the deceased. Even at the grave all were silent. At length a good-hearted German, as he turned to go home, said, "Vell, he was a good smoker!"

THE LITTLE PREACHER.—Looking out of his window one evening, Luther saw on a tree at hand a little bird making his brief and easy disposition for a night's rest. "Look," said he, "how that little fellow preaches faith to us all. He takes hold of his twig, tucks his head under his wing, and goes to sleep—leaving God to think for him."

RELIGION FOR LIFE.—Men think of religion when they are sick, old, in trouble or about to die, forgetting that it is a crown of life at all times; man's choicest privilege; his highest possession; the chain that links him to Heaven. If good for anything, it is good to live by. It is a small thing to die religiously; but to live divinely is man's work.

NOT VERY CATHOLIC.—Mr. T. W. Marshall, a devout Roman Catholic, who has just published at Brussels a work on "Christian Missions," defines Protestantism in England as "Paganism without its gods," and describes the Church of England as "simply a religious club, luxuriously furnished and copiously endowed, to which indifference, and not partiality, is the sole title of admission."

CLEANLINESS—ITS MORAL INFLUENCE.—A neat, clean, fresh-aired, sweet, cheerful, well-arranged, and well-situated house, exercises a moral as well as physical influence over its inmates, and makes the members of a family peaceable and considerate of the feelings and happiness of each other. The connection is obvious between the state of mind thus produced, and habits of respect for others and for those higher duties and obligations which no law can enforce. On the contrary, a filthy, noxious dwelling, rendered more so by its noisome site, in which none of the decencies of life can be observed, contributes to make its unfortunate inhabitants selfish, sensual, and regardless of the feelings of each other. The constant indulgence of such passions renders them reckless and brutal, and the transition is natural to propensities and habits incompatible with respect for the property of others or for the laws.

UNITARIANS AND HIGHWAYMEN.—A preacher of the Methodist persuasion in one of the village chapels, astounded some of his hearers the other Sunday morning by giving his preference to the profession of a highwayman over that of a Unitarian. He thought he had settled Unitarianism in that neighbourhood for some time. We were reminded of two events in history when we heard this, of a somewhat similar character and preference. Many years ago, when railways were new, and opposition to them in the House of Commons was carried on at a high rate, the late Colonel Sibthorpe declared that he "would rather meet a highwayman, or see a burglar on his premises, than an engineer: that he should be much more safe, and of the two classes he thought the former, the highwaymen, more respectable than a railway engineer." And long ago a number of bigotted priests and ignorant people, who knew not what they said, or did, cried out, "Not this man (Christ), but Barabbas; now Barabbas was a robber." How true the same spirit and form of opposition meet religious reformers in all ages.

TRADE IN MASSES.—The criminal court of Paris, during its sittings of the 24th August, 1860, condemned a priest, named Vidal, to 500*l.* fine, and five years' suspension, and three years' imprisonment, for swindling in his vocation. We relate one of his proceedings. It appears the holy father had bargained for, and received ready money for, more than 30,000 promised masses, at 1*l.* each. Of these he had performed 6,634, there remained therefore a balance of about 24,000 against him. These he provided for by trading in masses. There exist in Paris parochial libraries, the directors of which add to their trade in books another occupation, which materially augments their regular gains. In a few words, they make themselves agents for those priests whom they know have received payment for masses beforehand, which, in consequence of their enormous numerical amount, they were quite unable to perform. One of these speculators, for instance, becomes aware that a certain priest has undertaken to say an extraordinary number of masses; he goes to him and says: "You have received 1,200*l.*, 1,500*l.*, 3,000*l.*, for masses which it is impossible you can ever perform; give me that sum, and I will pledge myself to have the promised masses punctually sung; and as for you, I will give you 50*l.*, 100*l.*, 200*l.*, or 300*l.* worth of books." At the same time, be it said, the bookseller is obliged to furnish proofs of the actual performance of the masses. The bargain is struck; the bookseller gives the price agreed upon, and then writes to the country curates or priests, offering a certain number of masses to be said for the soul of So-and-so at the common price of 1*l.* each, to be paid in books. It is easy to imagine the immense gain of the bookseller, who, instead of money, gives books at a profit of 40, 50, or 75 per cent. As for the priest, he furnishes his library without having recourse to his purse.

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